

The Living Word of the Buddha  
The Buddha's Teachings in the Earliest Texts  
Translations, essays and notes by Piya Tan ©2010

**Volume 30**

2010b

*Theme: Skillful means*

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*Skillful means is the virtuous peak of wisdom and compassion*

Sutta translations & study website: <http://dharmafarer.org>  
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Revised

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Skillful Means  
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**The Minding Centre**, based in Singapore, is part of Piya Tan’s Dharma ministry. It was founded in 2006 to provide Dharma-based non-religious service to those in need of counsel and solace. It also serves as a haven and hub for those seeking Dharma by way of meditation and education, Sutta study and translation, and spiritual experience. The Centre also supports and promotes Piya Tan in his full-time Buddhist and related work.

**The Sutta Discovery Series** is part of the Living Word of the Buddha project which aspires to encourage and facilitate Buddhist Studies, both in a Dharma-inspired and academic manner for personal development as well as outreach work on a local and global scale. The Minding Centre and the Living Word of the Buddha project are motivated and guided by the vision of mere Buddhism.

**The mere Buddhist vision.** We aspire to learn, teach and practise mere Dharma, or “non-religious Buddhism,” that is, Buddhism as simple as possible, as the Buddha Dharma, so that it is open to all who seek true stillness and liberating wisdom. We aspire to compassionately and joyfully proclaim the possibility, necessity and urgency of gaining spiritual liberation in this life itself—at least as a streamwinner, with or without dhyana—in keeping with the Okkanti Samyutta (S 25). *Mere Buddhism is easy: live it and be free*

Piya Tan (TAN Beng Sin), 1949-  
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# Books & Talks by Piya Tan

[The budget way to have the whole set of Piya's current works is to buy the Sutta Discovery CD (SDCD) version and print what you need.]

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## **ORDERS**

To order, contact Ratna Lim ([themindingcentre@gmail.com](mailto:themindingcentre@gmail.com); hp +65 8211 0879)

Sutta website: <http://dharmafarer.org>

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*Please support PALI HOUSE (where this translation work is done).*

## The Living Word of the Buddha • Living the Word of the Buddha

### **SUTTA DISCOVERY** **Directly seeing the Buddha's Teachings**

**Every Tuesday @ 7.30-9.00 pm**

**Venue: The Buddhist Fellowship Centre**

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**Every Wednesday @ 7.20-9.00 pm**

**Venue: The Minding Centre**

Blk 644 Bukit Batok Central, #01-68 (2<sup>nd</sup> flr), Singapore 650644.

hp: 8211 0879; Email: [dharmafarer@gmail.com](mailto:dharmafarer@gmail.com)

Websites: <http://dharmafarer.org>; <http://themindingcentre.org>

**Every 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday @ 11.00 am-12.00 pm**

**Venue: Poh Ming Tse**

438 Dunearn Road, Singapore 289614. tel: 6466 0785. Website: <http://www.pmt.org.sg>

For class info: [themindingcentre@gmail.com](mailto:themindingcentre@gmail.com); hp: 8211 0879.

**Every 3rd Sunday @ 1.15-2.45 pm**

**Venue: Singapore Buddhist Mission**

9 Ruby Lane, Singapore 328284. tel: 6299 7216.

Website: <http://www.singaporebuddhistmission.net/>

The most direct way to learn Buddhism is to read and live the Pali suttas which contains some of the oldest records we have of the Buddha's teachings. As we search these scriptures, we will discover ourselves amidst their stories, teachings and practices, and even take a first step towards spiritual awakening.

This series will also help you learn how **to use the Pali Canon**: to locate suttas, teachings and stories, and have an idea of how Suttas are transmitted and translated. Wherever feasible, comparative studies will be made between the Pali, Sanskrit and Chinese (Āgama) versions of the suttas. Although a very basic knowledge of Buddhism (Five Precepts, etc) is helpful, no knowledge of these languages is required for this course. This class is suitable for beginner and mid-range level.

The Sutta Discovery (SD) series started with **the NUS Buddhist Society** weekly Sutta Study Group (SSG) classes in February 2002, and **the Buddhist Fellowship** SD series started in February 2003. These classes are still running today. This is a small record for an ongoing activity, especially Sutta study.

**Piya Tan**, who works on these Suttas and notes, and teaches them, was a former **Theravada monk** for 20 years. Today he is a full time lay Dharma teacher specializing in early Buddhism. He was consultant and regular lecturer to the Buddhist Studies Team (BUDS) that successfully introduced **Buddhist Studies in Singapore Secondary Schools** in the 1980s. After that, he was invited as a visiting scholar to **the University of California at Berkeley, USA**. He has written many ground-breaking and educational books on Buddhism (such as *Total Buddhist Work*) and social surveys (such as *Buddhist Currents* and *Charisma in Buddhism*). As a **full-time Dharma teacher**, he runs Buddhist, Sutta and Pali classes like the basic Pali course series, the Sutta Study Group (NUSBS), Dharma courses (the Singapore Buddhist Federation), Sutta Discovery classes (Buddhist Fellowship and elsewhere), and Sutta-based (including meditation) courses (Brahm Education Centre), besides his own full-time **Pali translation and research project**, the Pali House, and doing a comparative study of the Pali Nikāyas and the Chinese Āgamas. As a Theravāda monk, he learned insight meditation from **Mahasi Sayadaw** himself in the 1980s. As a lay teacher, he learned forest meditation from the **Ajahn Brahmavamso**. He has run numerous **meditation courses and retreats** for students and adults (including non-Buddhists) since 1980s. In 1992, he taught meditation at the University of California at Berkeley, USA, and also to BP, JPMorgan, the Defence Science Organization, GMO, HP and SIA. He is doing all this for the love of Dharma and of Ratna and their two children.

# KEEPING BUDDHISM CENTRED

Sutta translations: <http://dharmafarer.org>

As people today become more aware of Buddhism, many seek the simple original teachings of the Buddha. For over two decades now, Piya Tan has been inspired by this ideal of “mere Buddhism.” In this connection, he has set up the Minding Centre (Bukit Batok) and Pali House (Jurong East).

## The Minding Centre

*A still centre in life's storms*

Blk 644, Bukit Batok Central, #01-68 (2<sup>nd</sup> flr), Singapore 650644.

Email: [themindingcentre@gmail.com](mailto:themindingcentre@gmail.com); hp +65 8211 0879.

Courses: <http://themindingcentre.org>

**Every Wednesday** (7.20-9.00 pm): Meditation & Sutta Study.

**Courses:** Beginners' Meditation; Intermediate Meditation; Buddhist Psychology; Psychology of Meditation; Basic Practical Buddhist Counselling; Psychology of Meditation; Psychology of Death and Living, etc.

**Personal sessions:** Meditation coaching; Meditation therapy; Counselling (problems related to work, relationship, sleep, stress, anxiety, etc).

## Pali House

On Vesak Day, 12<sup>th</sup> May, 2006, Pali House was born, fulfilling Piya's long-time dream for living space that is spacious, quiet and conducive for his Dharma work.

- Pali House has one of the most complete set of early Buddhist scripture (texts and translations).
- The translating of the early Buddhist scripture in the **Sutta Discovery** series is done at Pali House.

Pali House is possible through the generosity of the Buddhist community and various individuals like yourself who have generously and regularly contributed to Piya Tan's work. He is doing full-time lay Dharma work without any salary. As such, your continued support will greatly help our Dharma work.

## How you can help

- Support for Piya Tan's full time Buddhist work (especially the Sutta Translation & related projects).
- Sponsor the Minding Centre monthly rental (\$2700) & maintenance cost, etc.
- Help with the Dharmafarer website (<http://dharmafarer.org>) through your expertise and time.
- Introduce people to the the Minding Centre and advertise our activities to your friends, etc.
- Donate to cost of computer peripherals and printing, especially laser printer toner and A4 copy paper.
- Sponsor purchases of Buddhist scriptures, books and materials (for the Sutta Translation library).
- Contribute to **the Sutta publication fund** (for printing costs of study notes and SD books, etc).
- Encourage relatives and friends to offer dāna together for merit of happy togetherness.
- After making such offerings or acts of merit, make this **Dharmafarer aspiration**:

*May this merit bring my mind peace and wisdom.  
May I enter the path of streamwinning in this life itself.*

**To donate**, please make your cheque payable to “**The Minding Centre**” & mail it to:

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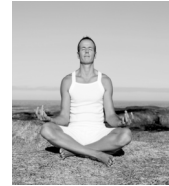
To join our classes and activities, please email us at [dharmafarer@gmail.com](mailto:dharmafarer@gmail.com).

# 1 Meditation & the Mind

Non-religious courses  
Instructor: Piya Tan

**WHAT, WHY & HOW of meditation: for absolute beginners as well as meditators.**

- **The three brains** (lizard brain, limbic region, neo-cortex); meditation stages
- **The body-mind**; feeling & emotions: their significant differences.
- **The brain during meditation**: how the mind calms and clears itself.
- **How the mind works moment to moment**; mindfulness in daily life.
- **Meditation methods**; basic practice sessions; how to gauge your progress.
- **What scientists are doing with meditation** during the last decades.



# 2 Psychology of Death & Living

**For those interested in true lasting happiness, meaning & purpose of life, rebirth**

- The last 48 hours of life.
- What happens when we die?
- Can we communicate with the dead?
- Dealing with fear and pain.
- How to help the dead? Merit transfer?
- The 12 links of life, death, and rebirth.
- The four tasks of grief.
- Gods, demons and ghosts: do they exist?
- Have we lived before, will we live again?
- Is rebirth immediate or takes 49 days?
- Have we lived before, will we live again?
- The Tibetan Book of the Dead.

# 3 Buddhist Psychology: mind, consciousness & well-being

**For anyone interested in the mind, mental health, self-knowledge.**

- ✓ **Healing yourself**: How the mind creates problems: 2 kinds of pain; perception.
- ✓ **Brain or mind?** Neuroplasticity: how the mind grows the brain & repairs it.
- ✓ **The conscious body**: Mind-body interbeing (the 5 aggregates of being).
- ✓ **The unconscious**: How the mind really works, or are we really in control?
- ✓ **Minding the mind**: Mental distractions and the nature of attention; consciousness.
- ✓ **The art of loving**: Negative emotions & healing emotions; sexuality; types of love.
- ✓ **Don't believe everything you think**: Unconscious defence mechanisms & coping skills.
- ✓ **Non-judgement day is here**: Mindfulness training in daily life (meditation).
- ✓ **Ancient wisdom, modern science**: Recent developments in Buddhist psychology.

# 4 Practical Buddhist Counselling *for beginners*

**Buddhist counselling self-counselling and how to listen & respond to others** when they have problems. How to be your own therapist.

**WHY BUDDHIST COUNSELLING?**

- Focuses on self-help; no need to tell problems to others.
- No medication or expensive therapy; goes to the **root** of the problem.
- Focuses on emotional resilience; discuss well-known case studies.
- Based on 2500 years of practical wisdom (incl meditation therapy).



For more information: ☎ <http://themindingcentre.org>

To register, call **8211 0879** (Ratna Lim), or ✉ [themindingcentre@gmail.com](mailto:themindingcentre@gmail.com)

# Non-religious **Relax, de-stress:** **Meditate**



- ✓ Deep rest
- ✓ Improve sleep quality
- ✓ Increase attention span
- ✓ Get well faster
- ✓ Be happy & age healthily

## Beginners' Meditation Course

- Monthly intake
- Small class size (maximum 18)
- Easy guided sessions
- A mental tool best learned early in life
- Affordable fees

Please call Ratna at [8211 0879](tel:82110879) or email: [themindingcentre@gmail.com](mailto:themindingcentre@gmail.com) now to register.

## You will learn about:

1. The nature of the mind
2. Why & how to meditate
3. Overcoming mental hindrances
4. Focussing the mind
5. Dealing with negative habits
6. Overcoming drowsiness
7. Self-healing
8. Emotional resilience
9. Sleeping well

## Interesting meditation facts:

- Based on living Buddhist meditation tradition over 2500 years old
- Meditation is safe & effective if you learn from a qualified & experienced instructor
- Meditation is a mainstream practice in Australia, the USA & the West
- Meditation can heal the mind and body
- Meditation helps increase attention span & productivity
- Meditation keeps the mind healthily active as we age (neuroplasticity)

## COURSE INSTRUCTOR: PIYA TAN

- meditation therapist; 62 years old; a monk for 20 years
- has taught meditation for over 30 years
- has taught at the Univ of California @ Berkeley, Defence Science Organization, GMO, SIA, HP, Hitachi, JPMorgan, BP, etc
- mentor and meditation instructor to various executives and individuals
- referrals from doctors, social workers, etc
- now translating and teaching early Indian texts on meditation and psychology.

Wiki Piya: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Piya\\_Tan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Piya_Tan)

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hp +65 8211 0879, email: [themindingcentre@gmail.com](mailto:themindingcentre@gmail.com) (near Bukit Batok MRT / INT)  
Please browse: <http://themindingcentre.org> for details and other courses.